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Subject: Ground Examination of Dead Piñons and Junipers Occurring on the Guadalupe RD (guadaluperd)

To: District Ranger, Guadalupe Ranger District

At the request of Danny Waldon, Sikes Act Coordinator, Lincoln NF, he, Dennis Dwyer of the Sacramento RD, and I examined several dead piñons and junipers along Forest Service Road 67 on the Guadalupe RD on Wednesday, June 16, 2004. Danny was concerned about the tree mortality occurring on the District and wanted to know why the trees were dying. Following is a brief summary of the results of this survey:

Our examination revealed the piñon and juniper mortality occurring on the Guadalupe RD was due to a combination of bark beetles and drought. Moisture-stressed piñons were attacked and killed by piñon ips beetles, *Ips confusus* (Figure 1.), and the moisture-stressed junipers were attacked and killed by an unknown species of cedar bark beetle belonging to the genus *Phloeosinus* (Figure 2.).



Figure 1. Piñon attacked and killed by piñon ips beetles



Figure 2. Juniper mortality caused by an unknown species of cedar bark beetle

Some of the dead and dying junipers examined showed no signs of insect activity, which suggests they are dying off from drought stress.



As a general rule, piñon ips beetles and cedar bark beetles are not aggressive in their attack and are generally found working under the bark of the trunks, tops, and limbs of weakened, dying, suppressed, and recently felled trees. Both of these bark beetles, however, can increase to outbreak levels, causing extensive areas of tree mortality during periods of drought. Ground surveys conducted on the District indicated tree mortality resulting from these bark beetles is currently at low levels. Furthermore, our 2004 insect and disease aerial detection survey, conducted over the District during the week of August 2, 2004, showed that insect and disease caused damages were at undetectable levels. Should the drought continue as predicted, additional piñon ips beetle and cedar bark beetle-caused tree mortality can be expected to occur throughout the lower elevation piñon-juniper woodlands forest cover type on the District.

If you or your staff has any questions concerning this survey, please contact me at (505) 842-3287 or by e-mail at trogers@fs.fed.us.

/s/ Terrence J. Rogers
TERRENCE J. ROGERS
Entomologist, Forest Health,
New Mexico Zone

cc: Frank R Martinez, Dennis Dwyer, Danny Waldon, Leonard Lucero, Debra Allen-Reid,
Mailroom R3 Lincoln